

Amendments to the claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A polishing assembly for use in a chemical mechanical polishing apparatus, comprising[::] :
 - a polishing pad having at least a first aperture therethrough;
 - a platen for supporting said polishing pad, said platen having at least a second aperture therethrough having an internally threaded portion at least a portion of which is larger than the aperture of the polishing pad; and
 - a substantially transparent plug including at least a first section having a first dimension and at least a second section having a second dimension larger than said first dimension, said first section for positioning substantially within said first aperture and said second section for positioning substantially within said second aperture.
2. (cancelled).
3. (previously presented) A polishing assembly according to Claim 1 wherein said second section has an externally threaded portion that is received by said internally threaded portion.
4. (previously presented) A polishing assembly according to Claim 1 further comprising a retaining member for securing said plug in said first and second apertures.

5. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 4 wherein said retaining member is externally threaded and received by said internally threaded portion.

6. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 1 wherein said second aperture includes a first surface which is substantially smooth.

7. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 6 wherein said second aperture includes a second internally threaded surface.

8. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 6 wherein said first aperture is substantially cylindrical.

9. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 8 wherein said second aperture is substantially cylindrical.

10. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 6 wherein said second aperture includes a substantially conical section.

11. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 1 wherein said plug is made of a polymeric material.

12. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 11 wherein said plug is insertable through said platen into said polishing pad.

13. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 12 wherein said plug is press-fit through said platen into said polishing pad.

14. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 5 wherein said retaining member is hollow to provide an optical path to said optical plug.

15. (currently amended) A polishing assembly for use in a chemical-mechanical polishing apparatus, comprising[[:]]:

a polishing pad having at least a first aperture therethrough;

a platen for supporting said polishing pad, said platen having at least a second aperture therethrough having an internally threaded section at least a portion of which is larger than said first aperture; and

a removable, substantially transparent polymeric plug including at least a first section having a first dimension and at least a second section having a second dimension larger than said first dimension, said first section for positioning substantially within said first aperture and said second section for positioning substantially within said second aperture.

16. (cancelled).

17. (cancelled).

18. (previously presented) A polishing assembly according to Claim 15 wherein said second section has an externally threaded portion that is received by said internally thread portion.

19. (previously presented) A polishing assembly according to Claim 15 further comprising a retaining member for securing said plug in said first and second apertures.

20. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 19 wherein said retaining member is externally threaded and received by said internally threaded portion.

21. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 15 wherein said second aperture includes a first surface which is substantially smooth.

22. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 21 wherein said second aperture includes a second internally threaded surface.

23. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 21 wherein said first aperture is substantially cylindrical.

24. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 23 wherein said second aperture is substantially cylindrical.

25. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 21 wherein said second aperture includes a substantially conical section.

26. (original) A polishing assembly according to Claim 20 wherein said retaining member is hollow to provide an optical path to said optical plug.

27. (currently amended) An optical plug for providing an optical path through a platen/polishing pad of a chemical-mechanical polishing apparatus, said optical plug comprising:
a first section having a first dimension for positioning in said polishing pad; and
a substantially conical second section coupled to the first section, the second section having a second larger dimension for positioning in said platen and having a threaded portion.

28. (original) An optical plug according to Claim 27 wherein said optical plug is made of a polymeric material.

29. (cancelled).

30. (cancelled).

31. (cancelled).

32. (currently amended) An optical plug according to Claim ~~[[31]]~~ 28 wherein said second section includes an externally threaded portion.

33. (cancelled).